

[7 May, 2007]

RAJYA SABHA

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE) (a) to (c)
The State Govt, of Orissa has assigned execution of rural electrification works under Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidhyutikaran Yojana (RGGVY) in twelve districts each to Power Grid Corporation of India (POWERGRID) and National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) and the balance six districts to National Hydro Electric Power Corporation (NHPC).

Orissa Govt, has forwarded thirty projects covering all the districts of the State for electrification of 13466 un-electrified villages, re-electrification of 4105 de-electrified villages and intensive electrification of 27954 already electrified villages with an outlay of Rs. 3703.17 crore.

Four projects covering Angul, Nayagarh, Gajapati and Ganjam districts are covered for electrification in Phase-I of the scheme. These projects envisage electrification of 1849 un-electrified villages, re-electrification of 753 de-electrified villages and intensive electrification of 4637 already electrified villages with an outlay of Rs. 434.10 crore.

Though the implementing agencies have issued tenders for all the above four projects, awards for only Angul & Nayagarh districts have so far been issued.

The implementing agencies so far have not reported completion of rural electrification works in any of the villages covered under sanctioned projects. An amount of Rs. 67.17 crore has been released to Orissa so far.

Balance 26 projects are targeted for Phase-II of the scheme in XI-Plan.

Athirappilly hydro-electric project

3438. SHRI ABDUL WAHAB PEEVEE:

SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government has given the clearance for the proposal of Athirappilly hydro-electric project in Kerala;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

- (c) if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) since when it is lying pending?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE): (a) to (d) Athirappilly Hydro Electric Project (163 MW) was accorded Techno-Economic Clearance (TEC) by Central Electricity Authority (CEA) on 31st March, 2005 at an estimated cost of Rs. 385.6 crores at April, 2004 price level. The environmental clearance for the above project was accorded on 20.1.1998. However, the environmental clearance was suspended on the basis of a judgment (17.10.2001) of the Hon'ble High Court of Kerala. The court had directed to conduct the public hearing. The public hearing was conducted by Kerala State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) on 6.2.2002 on the basis of an Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) report prepared with eight months data against one year's data required for river valley projects and proceedings were submitted to Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF). The public hearing panel recommended for 2nd public hearing with a comprehensive EIA. On a request from the State Government for not insisting upon 2nd public hearing, the issue was reviewed by the MoEF and the proposal placed before the Expert Committee. Environmental clearance for the project was restored on 10.2.2002 subject to strict compliance to certain terms and conditions.

Four Public Interest Litigations (PILs) were filed before the Hon'ble Court of Kerala against the grant of environmental clearance and implementation of the project. The Hon'ble High Court delivered its judgement on 23.3.2006 quashing the environment clearance of the project and directed the KSPCB to conduct the public hearing afresh after publishing the EIA report and complete the same within two months. The public hearing was conducted by the KSPCB on 15th June, 2006 and the report has been submitted to MoEF on 22nd July, 2006. The proposal was considered by the Environment Appraisal Committee (EAC) in its meetings held on 23rd August, 2006 and 15th November 2006. On receipt of further representations, A Sub-Committee of EAC has visited the proposed site during April, 2007.